



AOT in Action

TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from the Director:

Good morning.

This Saturday, September 27, tourism organizations from around the globe will recognize and celebrate **World Tourism Day**. Sanctioned by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the event provides an opportunity to look beyond borders, focus on common interests and celebrate the unique opportunities created by the travel and tourism industry.

The theme of this year's event is "Tourism Responding to the Challenge of Climate Change." In terms of sustainability, we as an industry have a special responsibility and opportunity and that is why I established the Tourism Sustainability Council (TSC). This council will be analyzing best practices and making recommendations for sustainability efforts that will include environmental issues, economic development and social well-being for Arizona.

Tourism has become one of the major players in international, national and state commerce, as the following 2007 statistics indicate. UNWTO estimates a record 900 million people traveled worldwide. Spending by domestic and international visitors in the U.S. generated \$740 billion in direct expenditures according to the Travel Industry Association (TIA). And here in Arizona, we welcomed 35.2 million domestic and international visitors who contributed \$19.3 billion to the state's economy.

Clearly the benefits of travel are everywhere. I join hundreds of cities, states and travel-related businesses in the U.S. and around the world in celebrating **World Tourism Day** on **September 27**.

For more information about **World Tourism Day** visit www.tia.org/WTD or www.unwto.org/wtd.

Have a great week.



Margie A. Emmermann
Director
Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News Flash

Rural Tourism Development Grant Program Guidelines Now Available!

The Rural Tourism Development Grant Program (RTDGP) guidelines for FY09 are now available! The objective of this competitive grant program is to provide coordinated funding for tourism related infrastructure projects in rural communities throughout the state. The funding amount for FY09 is \$500,000. These funds assist rural economic development through tourism to strengthen the regional and local economies and expand tourism in rural and Tribal communities throughout Arizona. The primary function of the infrastructure project must be tourism development and the project must be designed to initiate economic growth and enhance future tourism development. Eligible entities include not-for-profits, government organizations and tribal government.

New for FY09! Projects that contain an Arizona centennial component will receive priority funding. A detailed description of the criteria will be included in the FY09 guidelines and projects must comply with these guidelines to be considered a centennial project.

The FY09 RTDGP Guidelines define centennial projects as:

- Projects that include restoration of historic properties appropriate for use in the observance of the Arizona Centennial.
- Projects that provide a sense of unity and pride by accentuating the diverse nature of the State's tourist destinations.

Applications are available on AOT's business-to-business Web site www.azot.gov under the Grants section. Applications must be received by AOT no later than 5 p.m. **Wednesday, October 15, 2008.**

If you have any questions, please contact Glenn Schlottman, Tourism Education and Development Manager at 602-364-3727 or via e-mail at gschlottman@azot.gov. For information on the Arizona Centennial please contact Karen Churchard at 602-364-4158 or via e-mail at kchurchard@azot.gov.

SAVE the DATE: ATU's Interactive Marketing Workshop

The Arizona Office of Tourism is proud to present Arizona Tourism University's complimentary workshop **Four Key Pieces to the Interactive Marketing Puzzle.**

The “Four Key Pieces to the Interactive Marketing Puzzle” workshop is an informative and in-depth look at four of the most common interactive / online marketing elements: Search, E-mail, Social and Analytics. Building upon the previous Arizona Tourism University workshop, ‘How to Develop an Interactive Marketing Strategy,’ this year’s workshop will expand upon these ‘Four Keys’ to provide attendees with real-world examples, tips and tools that can be applied to their current interactive marketing campaigns.

Register now by contacting Meghan Dorn at 602-364-3708 or mdorn@azot.gov.

Four Key Pieces to the Interactive Marketing Puzzle will be held from **9:00 a.m. to Noon** in the following locations:

Tuesday, October, 28 – [White Stallion Ranch](#)

Thursday, October 30 – [Lowell Observatory](#)

Neither of these dates work with your schedule? Then take advantage of our new online opportunity!

This year, AOT is proud to introduce ATU Online. We will be offering all of our workshops over the Internet in the form of a webinar. These condensed versions will offer the same great information as the workshops. The inaugural class is **Thursday, November 6**. Be sure to register for the class!

Trippin’ with AOT

Japan Sales Mission Opportunity

AOT, along with other Western States, will be hosting its annual week-long sales mission to Japan October 26 – October 31. The mission will involve trade presentations and meetings in Tokyo and Osaka, with a media presentation and luncheon in Tokyo.

Participation fees are as follows:

- Suppliers: \$700 per supplier
- DMOs: \$800 per DMO (plus travel).

For more information please contact Osamu Hoshino at ohoshino@comcast.net or 801-266-3345.

German Trade Show Opportunity

AOT would like to invite you to join us at International Tourismus Boerse (ITB), the largest travel industry trade show in the world. ITB will be held March 11–15, 2009 in Berlin, Germany. More than 1,000,000 trade visitors and 11,000 exhibitors from 180 countries are expected to attend. ITB is not an appointment show; however, Arizona’s representatives in Germany do schedule appointments with German, Austrian and Swiss tour operators and media representatives.

Participation fees are as follows:

- Suppliers: \$2,000 for primary delegate and \$1,000 for the second delegate (plus travel).
- DMOs: \$2,500 for the primary delegate and \$1,000 for the second delegate (plus travel).

If you are interested in attending, please contact Loretta Belonio at 602-364-3725 or via e-mail at lbelonio@azot.gov.

French Sales Mission Opportunity

AOT will be conducting a three-day sales mission to France March 16–18, 2009. The mission will take place immediately following the International Tourismus Boerse (ITB) in Berlin and will be made up of trade and media appointments, followed by an event in Paris. AOT has carried out an annual sales mission to France since 2006, which has resulted in an increase of the number of French tour operators featuring Arizona from 64 in 2006 to 74 in 2008, a growth of 15.6 percent. This mission will once again will be an excellent opportunity to further highlight Arizona to this important and growing European market.

The cost to participate (excluding travel) will be:

- Suppliers: \$1,000 for the primary delegate / \$500 for the second delegate.
- DMOs: \$1,500 for the primary delegate / \$500 for the second delegate.

For additional information or a participation form, please contact Loretta Belonio at 602-364 3725 or via e-mail at lbelonio@azot.gov.

Industry News

October is Arizona Trail Month!

Governor Janet Napolitano recently proclaimed October as Arizona Trail Month. While any month is a good time to be on a section of the 807 mile Arizona Trail, throughout the month of October, Arizona Trail Association volunteers are offering a long list of “Treasure Our Trail” hikes and rides plus informative talks across the state. Arizona residents and visitors are encouraged to learn about the across Arizona path, and to go out and enjoy it, and also raise funds for the trail. For all the trek details and registration, visit www.aztrail.org or call 602-252-4794.

Travel Promotion Act Advances in House

The Travel Industry Association is applauding the leadership of the subcommittee on commerce, trade and consumer protection of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce for reporting H.R. 3232, the “Travel Promotion Act,” to the full committee. The bill was approved by a voice vote. “In the waning days on the 110th Congress, leaders are stepping forward to strengthen America's economy by passing the Travel Promotion Act,” said Roger Dow, president and CEO of TIA. The legislation establishes a public-private partnership to promote the U.S. as a premier international travel destination and communicate U.S. travel and entry policies. “We strongly urge Congress to pass the Travel Promotion Act before it adjourns for the year,” said Dow.
(*Special to TA*)

TIA President to Speak in Phoenix October 22, 2008

Roger Dow, President & CEO of the Travel Industry Association and former SVP Global Sales for Marriott, will share insights on the relatively unknown fact that the world pie of global travel is rapidly growing, while America's slice is shrinking. The negative impact on the U.S. economy since 2000 has been \$137 billion and 229,000 jobs. Combine this with the U.S. domestic air travel system in crisis and the outlook is not encouraging for business. In his presentation, “American's ‘on sale’ – so why aren't overseas travelers beating down our doors,” Mr. Dow will discuss current market conditions, future travel industry trends and what can be done to turn the situation around. With travel and tourism being such a major part of Arizona's economy and affecting so many businesses, you won't want to miss this!

The presentation, sponsored by the Economic Club of Phoenix, will be at the Arizona Biltmore, Wednesday, October 22. Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. with the program beginning at noon. For more information, visit <http://wpcarey.asu.edu/ecp/>.

Staycations: Get the Facts and More at TIA's Marketing Outlook Forum

The Staycations being planned by U.S. travelers this year may be homebased, but they certainly are not homebound. Additionally, the economy and other factors are not keeping as many people home as anticipated. According to a recent survey of 2,231 U.S. adults, 75 percent said that they are planning a leisure trip during the next six months, while only nine percent said that they are planning staycations over the same period. But of those staying local, nearly 25 percent are planning to stay at a hotel, motel or resort during their staycations and will likely become backyard tourists, visiting nearby sites, theme parks and other attractions. These results from the Travel Industry Association/Ypartnership travelhorizons survey is a preview of the valuable information that will be presented during TIA's Marketing Outlook Forum on October 27-30, 2008 in Portland, Oregon.

During two full days, more than 50 of the travel industry's leaders will address changes in the travel, offer predictions about the future, and provide practical insight in where to look for new markets of opportunity. Plus, all attendees will receive free admittance to two professional development workshops being conducted by the Walt Disney Parks and Resorts research team on October 30. An early bird registration rate is available through September 12. For the complete schedule and to register, go to www.tia.org/mof.

Volunteers to help Grand Canyon National Park Celebrate National Public Lands Day

On Saturday, September 27, more than 60 volunteers will be commemorating the 15th annual National Public Lands Day by working on special projects at Grand Canyon National Park. National Public Lands Day (NPLD) is the nation's largest, hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance the public lands Americans enjoy. In 2007, approximately 110,000 volunteers built trails and bridges, planted trees and plants, and removed trash and invasive plants in almost 1100 locations around the country. This year, organizers hope to increase participation to almost 120,000 volunteers "lending a hand to America's public lands" in as many as 1500 locations nationwide. All national park sites will also be celebrating NPLD by offering a "fee free day" for the public. All entry fees and commercial tour fees will be waived for September 27 only. Recreation "user fees" such as camping fees and backcountry permit fees will not be waived.

For more information on National Public Lands Day, please visit the official NPLD web site at www.publiclandsday.org. For information about volunteering at your favorite national park, please visit www.nps.gov/volunteer; or to learn more about volunteering at Grand Canyon National Park, please call 928-774-7278. For information on visiting Grand Canyon National Park, please go to our web site at www.nps.gov/grca, or call 928-638-7888.

Two Arizona Attractions Selected as ABA's Best Events for 2009!

Congratulations to the Cowgirl Up! Art Show & Sale – Desert Caballeros Western Museum in Wickenburg and the 27th Annual Boat Parade of Lights in Lake Havasu City for being selected as two of the American Bus Association's (ABA) Top 100 Events in North American for 2009. This is the first year the Wickenburg attraction has been on the list. What began as a way for motorcoach operators to incorporate new product into their itineraries has grown to one of the most sought-after lists by travel professionals, motorcoach operators and the general public. The

list highlights the top fairs, festivals, parades, exhibits, theater and shows across the U.S. and Canada. For more information or to view the entire list, visit www.buses.org.

Travel Industry Unites to Push Congress for Energy Policy

As the price of oil escalated to unprecedented levels earlier this year, the travel and tourism industry mobilized to urge Washington policymakers to enact an "emergency energy policy that will bring down fuel costs to economically sustainable levels and keep Americans productively traveling by air." According to [Travel Management Daily](#) a broad-based coalition, called 100DollarOil.us, was formed this summer to urge policymakers to act now as it enlists industry support to lobby elected representatives. Organizers Bruce Charendoff, Sabre Holdings Corp. senior vice president of government affairs and deputy general counsel, and Business Travel Coalition founder Kevin Mitchell last week told the Society of Government Travel Professionals here that the consequences of inaction would be "devastating" to the economy and travel industry.

Study: 58% Aren't Familiar with Social Networking

Apparently tweeting, friending and linking have not infiltrated popular culture as much as one might think says [OnlineMediaDaily](#). A new study from Synovate reveals that well over half (58 percent) of those surveyed do not know what social networking is. Even more surprising, more than a third of those who do engage are losing interest in it. "Of course this is a reflection of the wide age groups covered in our survey," said Steve Garton, Synovate global head of media research. "It's a different story if you only look at younger people." The Chicago-based company spoke with more than 13,000 respondents ages 18-65 years in 17 markets around the world to find out who's connected and who's not. The Dutch were most likely to know the term social networking (89 percent), followed by the Japanese (71 percent) and Americans (70 percent). Popularity of the phenomenon is fading amongst some, according to the study. When asked if they agree with the statement "I am losing interest in online social networking", 36% of social networkers globally said yes, led by Japan (55 percent), Slovakia (48 percent), Canada (47 percent), Poland and the U.S. (45 percent). The Synovate survey also looked into who were members of social networking sites and which sites they belonged to. The biggest finding, according to the company, was that social networking is definitely not U.S.-centric. Overall, 26 percent of all respondents globally are members of social networking sites. This peaked with the Netherlands at 49 percent, United Arab Emirates (UAE) at 46 percent, Canada at 44 percent and the U.S. at 40 percent.

Hotel Survey Shows U.S. Rates Leveling, Elsewhere Strong

Hotel rates for corporate travelers leveled off in North America for the first half of 2008, while other regions — particularly Eastern Europe and Asia/Pacific — continued to show strong rate hikes, according to six-month hotel surveys recently released by HRG. The surveys, based on industry intelligence and actual room nights booked and rates paid by HRG clients in the United Kingdom during the first half of the year, showed double-digit percentage increases in a number of U.S. markets, including Atlanta, Boston and Dallas. Overall, however, North America has been the first region to see rates begin to level off, and HRG said to expect larger decreases in the second half of 2008, as hotels increasingly begin to open up corporate rate availability. While New York remained the most expensive North American city, with an average rate of \$358.98 per night, says [BusinessTravelNews](#), it remained stable compared with the same period in 2007. Rates also were flat in Los Angeles and even went down in Houston and San Francisco, according to the reports. In Canada, rates were up by 12 percent in Vancouver and by 23 percent in Calgary, which HRG attributed to lack of supply in the face of high demand from the oil sector.